MARVEL COMICS
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U.S.A GENT
#1 OF 4
IN HIS FIRST
LIMITED SERIES!
AVENGERS ASSEMBLE!
A30
30 YEARS
1963-1993
DEATH LOOMS ON THE
"ROAD TO REDEMPTION"

WHEN THE GOVERNMENT FORCED CAPTAIN AMERICA TO RESIGN, THERE WAS ONE MAN THEY DEEMED FIT TO REPLACE HIM. HIS NAME WAS **JOHN WALKER,** AND HE BROUGHT HIS OWN BRAND OF PATRIOTISM TO THE JOB. WITH CAP'S RETURN, THE STRENGTH-AUGMENTED SUPER-PATRIOT ASSUMED A NEW GUISE, BECOMING THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S FOREMOST COSTUMED OPERATIVE!

Stan Lee presents **U.S. AGENT!**

ROAD TO REDEMPTION

MARK GRUENWALD, WRITER M.C. WYMAN, PENCILER KEITH WILLIAMS, INKER
CLEM ROBINS, letterer / BOB SHAREN, colorist / NEL YOMTOV, editor / TOM DEFALCO, editor-in-chief

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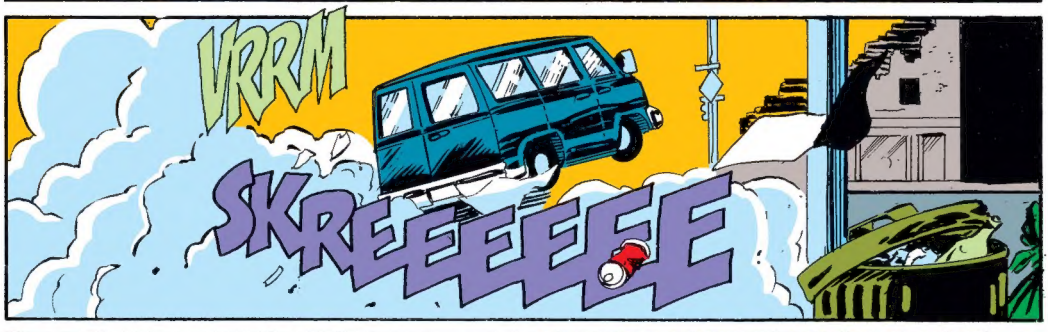
MISTER ELOGANTO...OPEN UP. IT'S YOUR LANDLORD.
NOK NOK
KREEK
?
VWOOM!
beep beep
BE VERY, VERY QUIET.
COME ON, BABY, OPEN UP--!
THAT'S A GIRL! GOOD, ISN'T IT?
KREEK

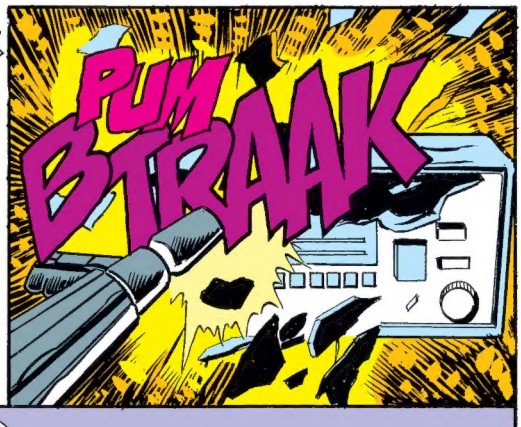
!
¿TIO?
EH?
MANUEL ELOGANTO...?
¡ULP!
PULL THAT TRIGGER AND THERE WILL BE NO ONE TO TAKE CARE OF THE CHILDREN!
THEY ARE YOURS?
MY SISTER'S ...I HELP OUT WHEN SHE'S AT WORK. HER HUSBAND DIED LAST YEAR IN A--
WHY ARE YOU HERE? I HAVE NOTHING WORTH STEALING. I WAS NOT AWARE I HAD ENEMIES ANYMORE.
YOU WERE ONCE THE COSTUMED CRIMINAL KNOWN AS THE MASKED MATADOR.
SI. BUT THAT WAS YEARS AGO. SINCE THEN I SERVED MY DEBT TO SOCIETY.
I HAVE STAYED CLEAN FOR...FOR YEARS!

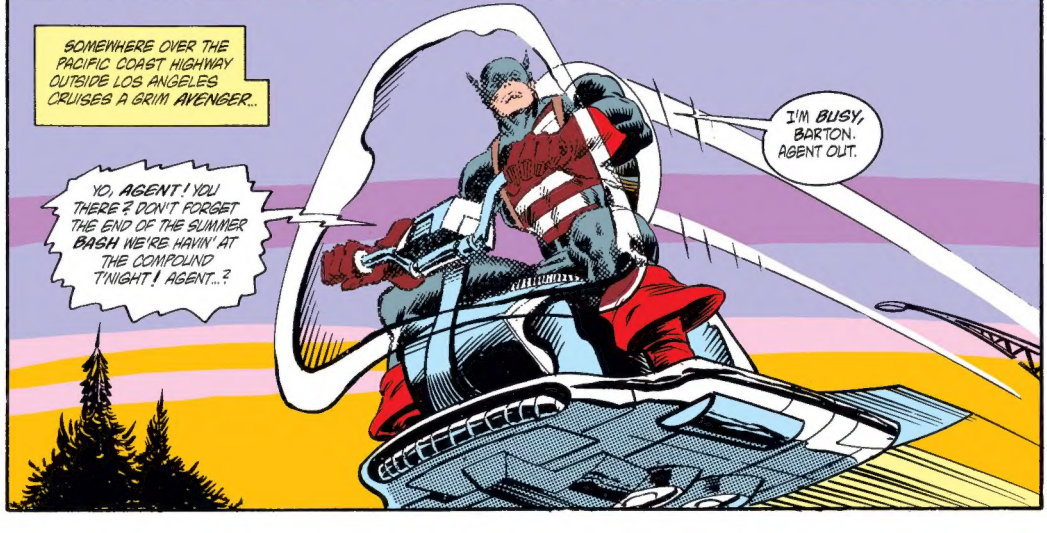
ONCE A CRIMINAL, ALWAYS A CRIMINAL, MR. ELOGANTO.
YOUR KIND ARE ALL ALIKE. IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE YOU REVERT TO TYPE.
THAT MAY BE TRUE FOR OTHERS. BUT I AM AN INDIVIDUAL...
...I SWEAR ON MY MOTHER'S GRAVE, I SHALL NEVER DISHONOR MY FAMILY AS I DID IN MY YOUTH!
DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM, MR. ELOGANTO? I AM THE SCOURGE OF THE UNDERWORLD.
THE KILLER OF CRIMINALS--I HEARD OF YOU IN PRISON! THEY SAID YOU WERE DEAD!
SO I WISHED THE WORLD TO BELIEVE.
WAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
IF YOU KNOW ANY PRAYERS, MR. ELOGANTO, SAY THEM.

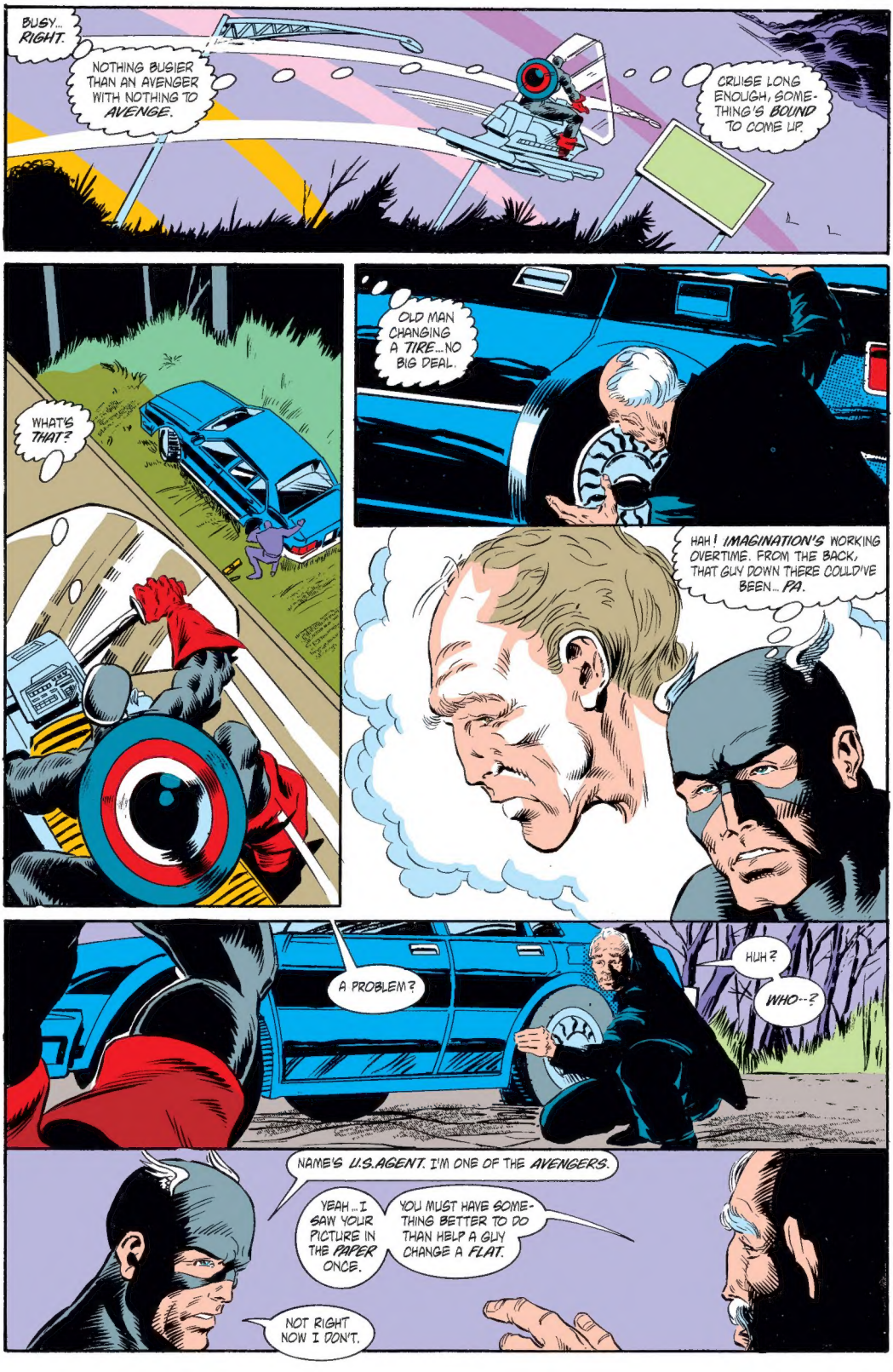
IF YOU ARE GOING TO DO IT, SEÑOR SCOURGE, BE DONE WITH IT.
I WILL NOT BEG FOR MY LIFE. IT IS NOT WORTH THAT MUCH ANYMORE. EXCEPT PERHAPS AS A BABY SITTER.
ALL I ASK IS THAT YOU SEND THE CHILDREN OUT OF THE ROOM. THIS IS NOT SOMETHING THEY SHOULD SEE.
ARRRHH!
¡DIOS!
THERE, THERE, MIGUELITO, DON'T CRY...
...THE BAD MAN HAS GONE AWAY...
WHA--?
HEY!

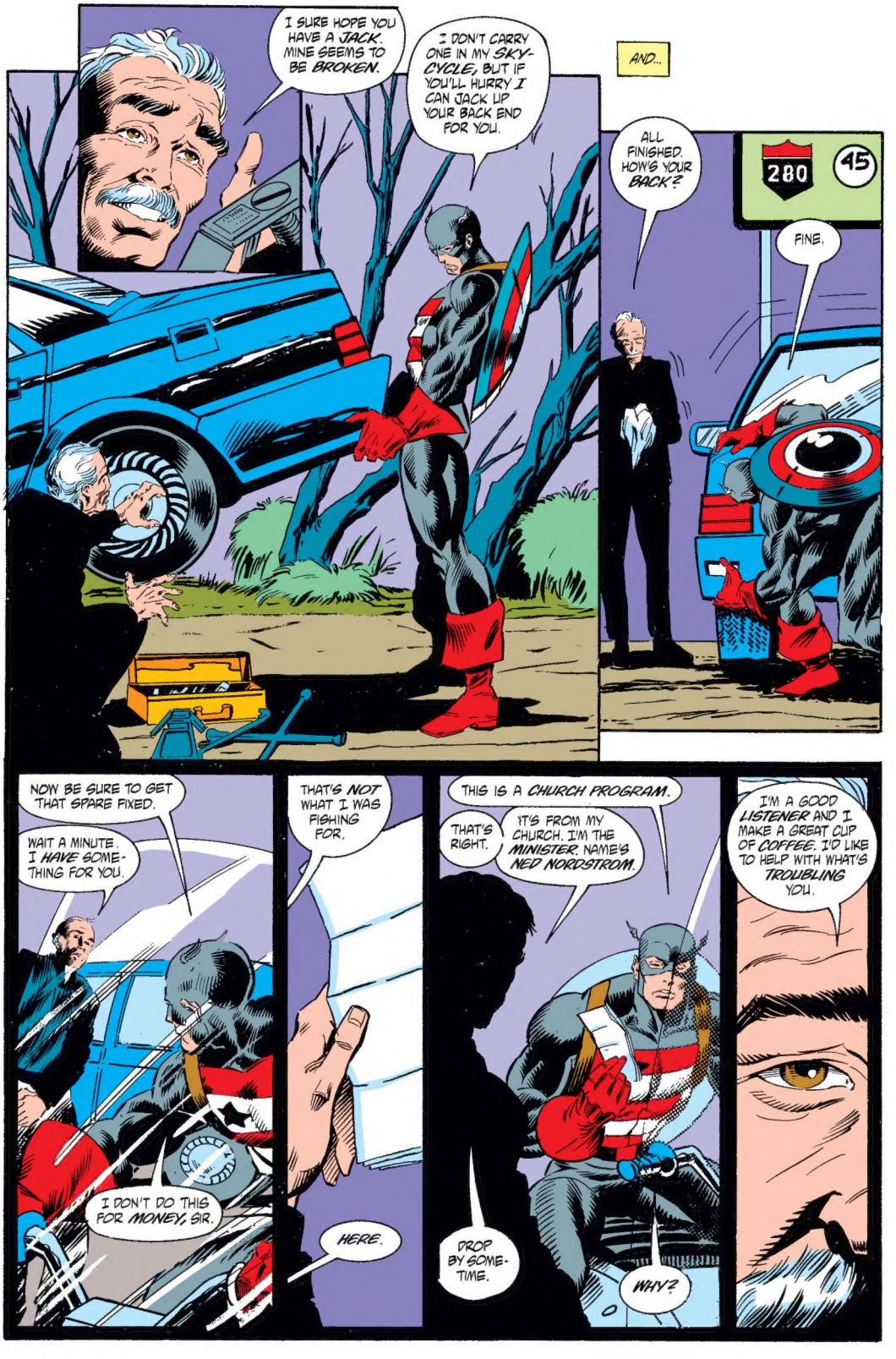

VRRM
SKREEEEEEE

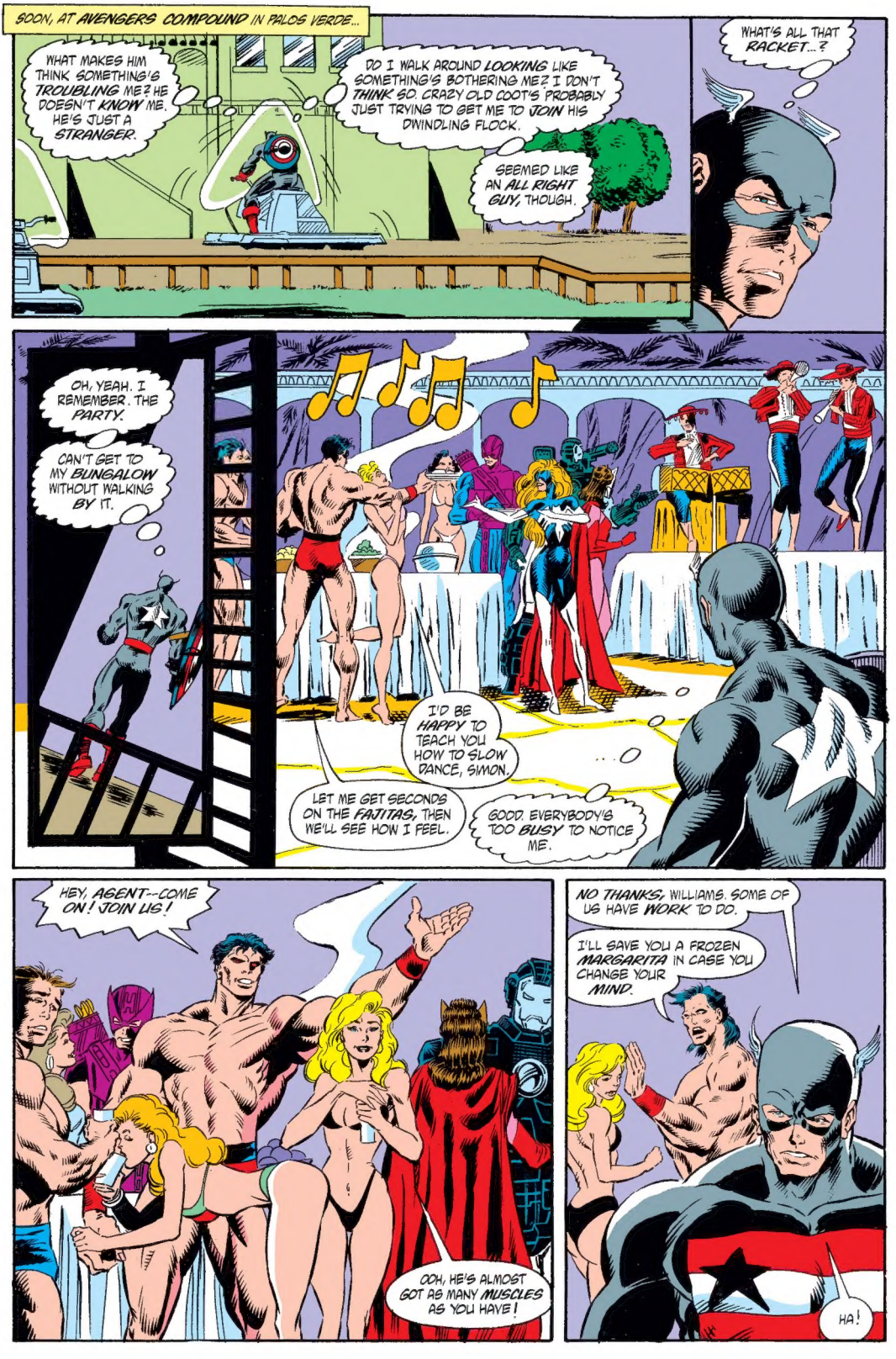
DOMINO TO SCOURGE. MISSION STATUS ?
HOW DID--?

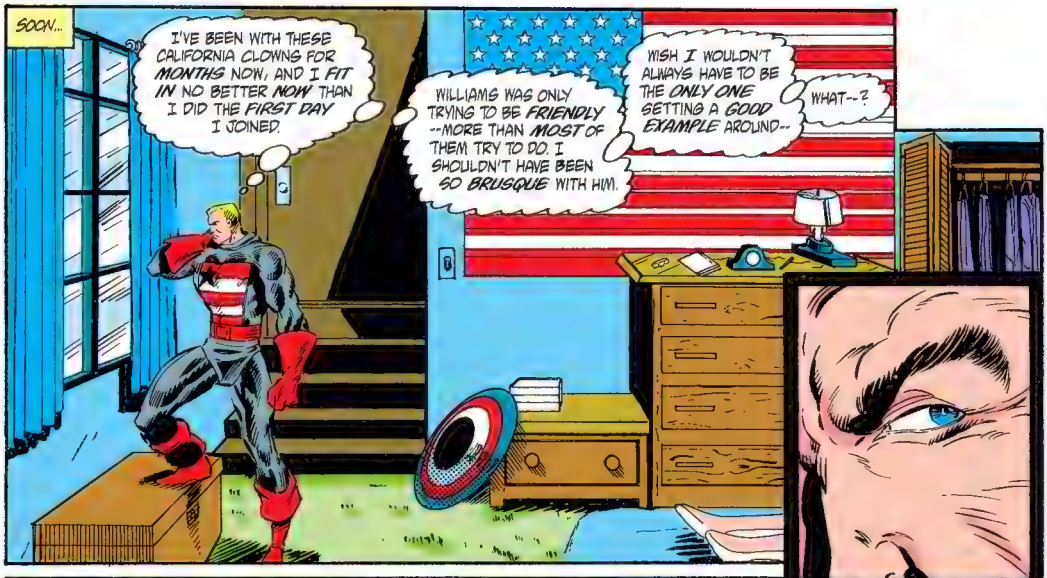

PUM
BTRAAK

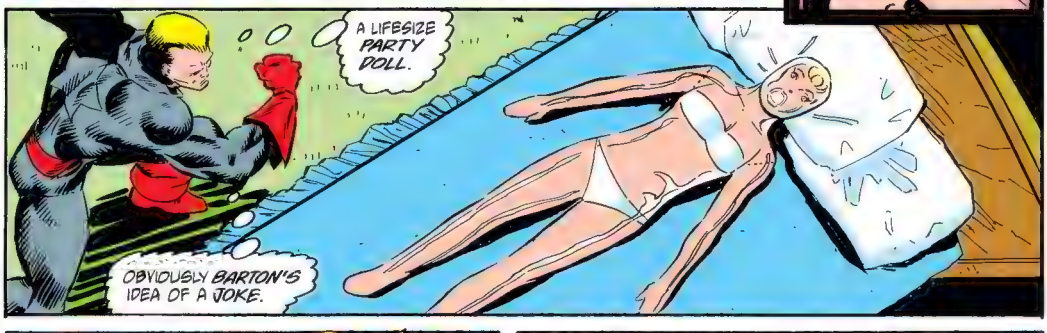

SOMEWHERE OVER THE PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY OUTSIDE LOS ANGELES CRUISES A GRIM AVENGER...
YO, AGENT! YOU THERE? DON'T FORGET THE END OF THE SUMMER BASH WE'RE HAVIN' AT THE COMPOUND T'NIGHT! AGENT...?
I'M BUSY, BARTON. AGENT OUT.


BUSY... RIGHT.
NOTHING BUSIER THAN AN AVENGER WITH NOTHING TO AVENGE.
CRUISE LONG ENOUGH, SOMETHING'S BOUND TO COME UP.
WHAT'S THAT?
OLD MAN CHANGING A TIRE... NO BIG DEAL.
HAH! IMAGINATION'S WORKING OVERTIME. FROM THE BACK, THAT GUY DOWN THERE COULD'VE BEEN... PA.
A PROBLEM?
HUH?
WHO--?
NAME'S U.S.AGENT. I'M ONE OF THE AVENGERS.
YEAH... I SAW YOUR PICTURE IN THE PAPER ONCE.
YOU MUST HAVE SOMETHING BETTER TO DO THAN HELP A GUY CHANGE A FLAT.
NOT RIGHT NOW I DON'T.

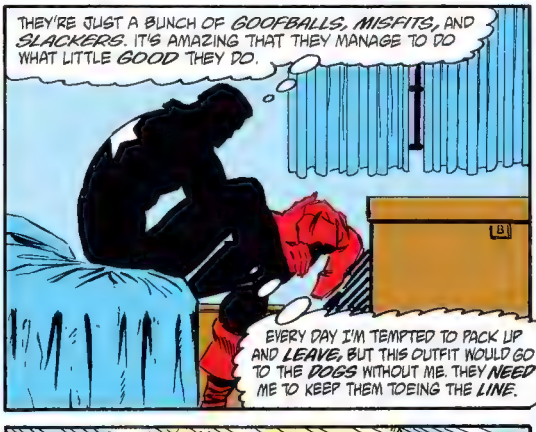

I SURE HOPE YOU HAVE A JACK. MINE SEEMS TO BE BROKEN.
I DON'T CARRY ONE IN MY SKY-CYCLE, BUT IF YOU'LL HURRY I CAN JACK UP YOUR BACK END FOR YOU.
AND...
ALL FINISHED. HOW'S YOUR BACK?
280
45
FINE.
NOW BE SURE TO GET THAT SPARE FIXED.
WAIT A MINUTE. I HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU.
I DON'T DO THIS FOR MONEY, SIR.
THAT'S NOT WHAT I WAS FISHING FOR.
HERE.
THIS IS A CHURCH PROGRAM.
THAT'S RIGHT.
IT'S FROM MY CHURCH. I'M THE MINISTER. NAME'S NED NORDSTROM.
DROP BY SOMETIME.
WHY?
I'M A GOOD LISTENER AND I MAKE A GREAT CUP OF COFFEE. I'D LIKE TO HELP WITH WHAT'S TROUBLING YOU.

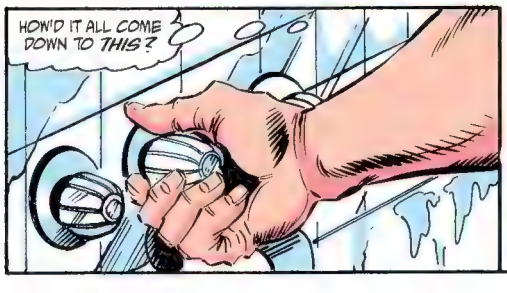

SOON, AT AVENGERS COMPOUND IN PALOS VERDE...
WHAT MAKES HIM THINK SOMETHING'S TROUBLING ME? HE DOESN'T KNOW ME. HE'S JUST A STRANGER.
DO I WALK AROUND LOOKING LIKE SOMETHING'S BOTHERING ME? I DON'T THINK SO. CRAZY OLD COOT'S PROBABLY JUST TRYING TO GET ME TO JOIN HIS DWINDLING FLOCK.
SEEMED LIKE AN ALL RIGHT GUY, THOUGH.
WHAT'S ALL THAT RACKET...?
OH, YEAH. I REMEMBER. THE PARTY.
CAN'T GET TO MY BUNGALOW WITHOUT WALKING BY IT.
I'D BE HAPPY TO TEACH YOU HOW TO SLOW DANCE, SIMON.
LET ME GET SECONDS ON THE FAJITAS, THEN WE'LL SEE HOW I FEEL.
GOOD. EVERYBODY'S TOO BUSY TO NOTICE ME.
HEY, AGENT--COME ON! JOIN US!
OOH, HE'S ALMOST GOT AS MANY MUSCLES AS YOU HAVE!
NO THANKS, WILLIAMS. SOME OF US HAVE WORK TO DO.
I'LL SAVE YOU A FROZEN MARGARITA IN CASE YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND.
HA!

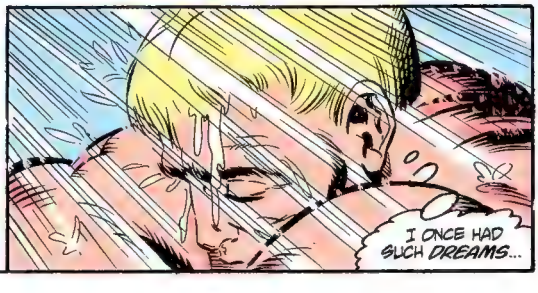

SOON...
I'VE BEEN WITH THESE CALIFORNIA CLOWNS FOR MONTHS NOW, AND I FIT IN NO BETTER NOW THAN I DID THE FIRST DAY I JOINED.
WILLIAMS WAS ONLY TRYING TO BE FRIENDLY --MORE THAN MOST OF THEM TRY TO DO. I SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN SO BRUSQUE WITH HIM.
WISH I WOULDN'T ALWAYS HAVE TO BE THE ONLY ONE SETTING A GOOD EXAMPLE AROUND--
WHAT--?


A LIFESIZE PARTY DOLL.
OBVIOUSLY BARTON'S IDEA OF A JOKE.

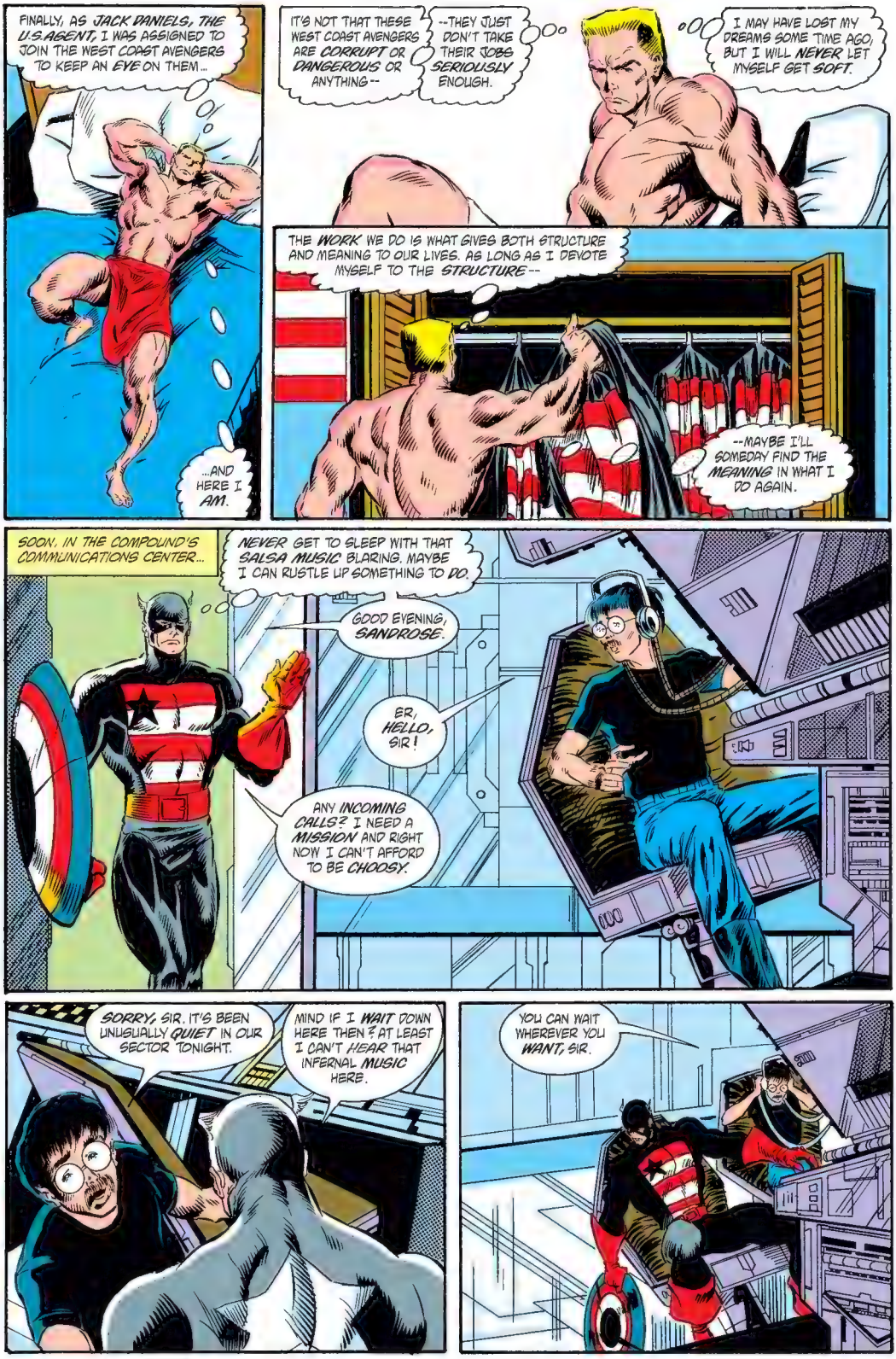
BLAP
AND I WONDER WHY I DON'T SOCIALIZE MORE WITH THE OTHERS AFTER HOURS? THIS IS WHY.


THEY'RE JUST A BUNCH OF GOOFBALLS, MISFITS, AND SLACKERS. IT'S AMAZING THAT THEY MANAGE TO DO WHAT LITTLE GOOD THEY DO.
EVERY DAY I'M TEMPTED TO PACK UP AND LEAVE, BUT THIS OUTFIT WOULD GO TO THE DOGS WITHOUT ME. THEY NEED ME TO KEEP THEM TOEING THE LINE.


HOW'D IT ALL COME DOWN TO THIS?


I ONCE HAD SUCH DREAMS...

"DREAMS OF POWER... THAT'S WHAT LED ME TO SIGNING UP FOR THE POWER BROKER'S GRUELING STRENGTH AUGMENTATION TREATMENT...
"DREAMS OF GLORY PROMPTED ME TO TAKE ON THE GUISE OF THE SUPER-PATRIOT... AND CHALLENGE CAPTAIN AMERICA TO SEE WHO BEST REPRESENTED THIS PROUD LAND OF OURS...
"DREAMS OF HONOR CAUSED ME TO ACCEPT GOVERNMENT AGENT VAL COOPER'S OFFER TO REPLACE CAPTAIN AMERICA AS THE COUNTRY'S TOP COSTUMED OPERATIVE...
"BUT THEN ALL MY DREAMS STARTED TO GO SOUR... AS THE NEW CAPTAIN AMERICA, I WAS FORCED TO FIGHT FORMER BUDDIES OF MINE CALLING THEMSELVES RIGHT- AND LEFT-WINGER...
"THANKS TO THOSE TWO, THE MILITANT WATCHDOGS KIDNAPPED MY MA AND PA... AND SHOT THEM DURING MY RESCUE ATTEMPT...
"MY DREAMS DIED WHEN MY FOLKS DID.
"WHEN THE GOVERNMENT DECIDED TO FAKE MY DEATH SO I COULD GO UNDERCOVER, IT DIDN'T MATTER TO ME ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.
"I LAID LOW, TRAINED LIKE CRAZY, AND LET THEM FASHION NEW CIVILIAN AND PUBLIC IDENTITIES FOR ME.
"THEY HAD TOO MUCH INVESTED IN ME ALREADY TO LET ME JUST SLIDE, I GUESS.


FINALLY, AS JACK DANIELS, THE U.S.AGENT, I WAS ASSIGNED TO JOIN THE WEST COAST AVENGERS TO KEEP AN EYE ON THEM...
...AND HERE I AM.
IT'S NOT THAT THESE WEST COAST AVENGERS ARE CORRUPT OR DANGEROUS OR ANYTHING--
--THEY JUST DON'T TAKE THEIR JOBS SERIOUSLY ENOUGH.
I MAY HAVE LOST MY DREAMS SOME TIME AGO, BUT I WILL NEVER LET MYSELF GET SOFT.
THE WORK WE DO IS WHAT GIVES BOTH STRUCTURE AND MEANING TO OUR LIVES. AS LONG AS I DEVOTE MYSELF TO THE STRUCTURE--
--MAYBE I'LL SOMEDAY FIND THE MEANING IN WHAT I DO AGAIN.
SOON, IN THE COMPOUND'S COMMUNICATIONS CENTER...
NEVER GET TO SLEEP WITH THAT SALSA MUSIC BLARING. MAYBE I CAN RUSTLE UP SOMETHING TO DO.
GOOD EVENING, SANDROSE.
ER, HELLO, SIR!
ANY INCOMING CALLS? I NEED A MISSION AND RIGHT NOW I CAN'T AFFORD TO BE CHOOSY.
SORRY, SIR. IT'S BEEN UNUSUALLY QUIET IN OUR SECTOR TONIGHT.
MIND IF I WAIT DOWN HERE THEN? AT LEAST I CAN'T HEAR THAT INFERNAL MUSIC HERE.
YOU CAN WAIT WHEREVER YOU WANT, SIR.

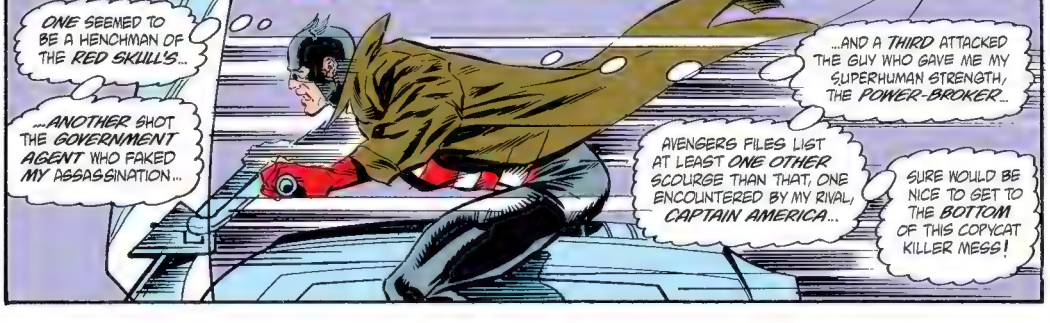
AN HOUR PASSES IN VIRTUAL SILENCE...
I LIKE SANDROSE. HE'S CONSCIENTIOUS, NOTHING IN COMMON BESIDES THAT, UNFORTUNATELY.
HERE'S SOMETHING, SIR. I'LL PATCH IT OVER THE LOUD-SPEAKER!

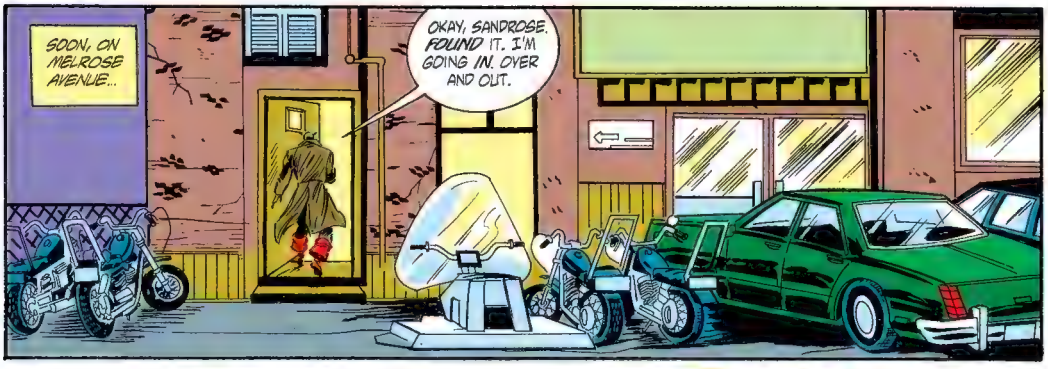
--VENGERS! I NEED HELP! SOMEONE'S AFTER ME! I THINK IT'S THAT CRIMINAL-KILLER SCOURGE!
A WOMAN'S VOICE!

LET ME TALK TO HER!
THIS IS THE U.S.AGENT, MA'AM. I'LL HELP YOU. WHERE ARE YOU?
A BAR ON MELROSE--
LISTEN TO ME. STAY IN A PUBLIC PLACE. DON'T GO ANYPLACE WHERE YOU'LL BE ALONE, NOT EVEN THE BATHROOM. I'LL COME GET YOU. YOU'LL KNOW IT'S ME BECAUSE I'LL SAY "SHEBOYGAN MAKES GOOD SAUSAGES."
GOT IT?

TALK TO HER; GET HER EXACT ADDRESS AND CALL ME ON MY COMMUNICARD! TELL HER I'LL BE THERE ASAP!
YESSIR!

AND AFTER A BRIEF STOP...
THE SCOURGE OF THE UNDERWORLD...
ASSUMING THE CALL'S LEGITIMATE, WHICH SCOURGE?
I'VE ENCOUNTERED THREE SO FAR.


ONE SEEMED TO BE A HENCHMAN OF THE RED SKULL'S...
...ANOTHER SHOT THE GOVERNMENT AGENT WHO FAKED MY ASSASSINATION...
...AND A THIRD ATTACKED THE GUY WHO GAVE ME MY SUPERHUMAN STRENGTH, THE POWER-BROKER...
AVENGERS FILES LIST AT LEAST ONE OTHER SCOURGE THAN THAT, ONE ENCOUNTERED BY MY RIVAL, CAPTAIN AMERICA...
SURE WOULD BE NICE TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS COPYCAT KILLER MESS!


SOON, ON MELROSE AVENUE...
OKAY, SANDROSE. FOUND IT. I'M GOING IN. OVER AND OUT.

GREAT. MORE BAD MUSIC, TWICE AS LOUD.

WHOA THERE, STUDLY. THIS AIN'T NO COSTUME PARTY.
LOOK WHO'S TALKING.

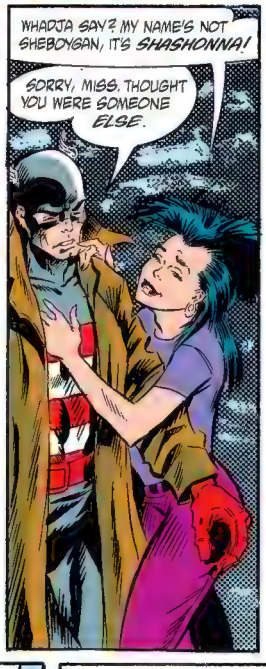
WHMP!

I'M JUST BENDING IT. DON'T BE SUCH A BABY.
BONNNK!

WHAT A DIVE. DON'T PEOPLE HAVE ANYTHING BETTER TO DO THAN KILL BRAIN CELLS IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?
NOW WHERE'S THE CALLER?

HMMM. MAYBE I SHOULD'VE ASKED FOR A BETTER DESCRIPTION.
WHAT WOULD A NICE GIRL BE DOING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS? PROBABLE ANSWER: SHE'S NOT A NICE GIRL.

SPEAKING OF WHICH...
"SHEBOYGAN MAKES GOOD SAUSAGES."


WHADJA SAY? MY NAME'S NOT SHEBOYGAN, IT'S SHASHONNA!
SORRY, MISS. THOUGHT YOU WERE SOMEONE ELSE.

C'MON, MASKED MAN-- I'M AS GOOD AS YOU'RE GONNA FIND HERE.
I SINCERELY HOPE NOT.
THE GIRL IN THE CORNER?

"SHEBOYGAN MAKES GOOD SAUSAGES."
U.S.AGENT!
IT'S HER.
WE'VE GOT TO GET YOU OUT OF HERE TO SOMEPLACE SAFER.

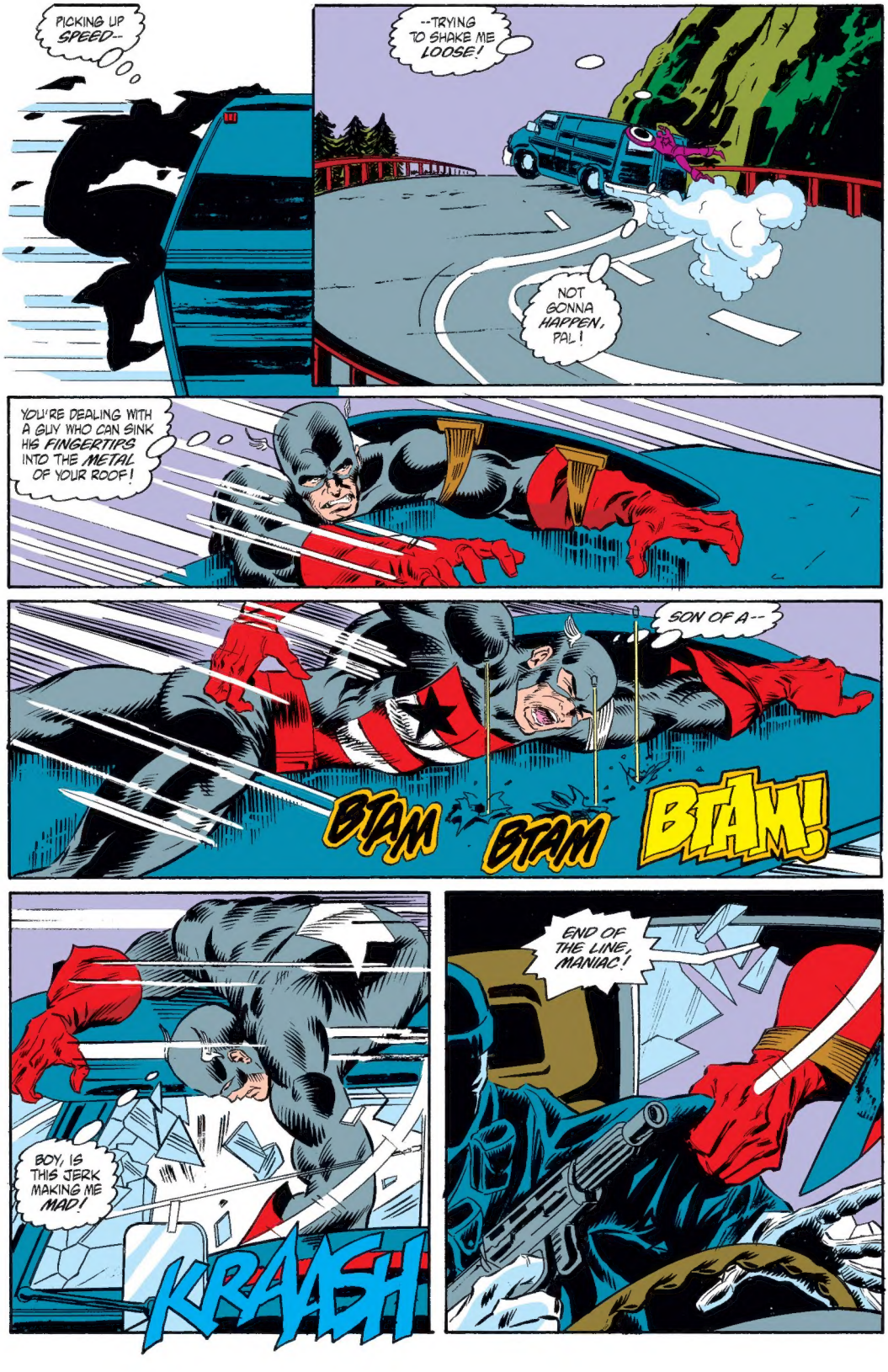
BUT HE WON'T ATTACK WHILE I'M IN HERE--HE WON'T JEOPARDIZE THE LIVES OF INNOCENTS.
SOUNDS LIKE YOU KNOW A LOT ABOUT HIM. WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
LISA WINTERS.
SCOURGE ONLY HUNTS DOWN CRIMINALS. WHAT MAKES YOU THINK HE'S HUNTING YOU?

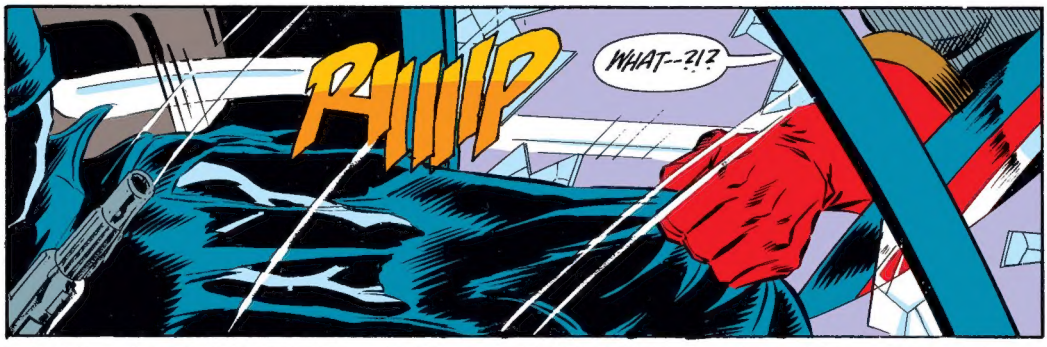
I HAVE A TWIN SISTER WHO OPERATES BY THE NAME OF MYSTERIA IN VEGAS--SHE USES FOG GENERATORS FOR PETTY THEFTS, NEVER HURTS ANYBODY. SHE TOLD ME ABOUT SCOURGE.
I THINK HE THINKS I'M HER!
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK IT'S SCOURGE AND NOT JUST SOME PSYCHO EX-BOY-FRIEND OF YOURS?
I'M NOT SURE WHO HE IS. I JUST KNOW THAT SOMEBODY'S TRYING TO KILL ME--HE SHOT OUT MY TIRES A FEW BLOCKS FROM HERE!

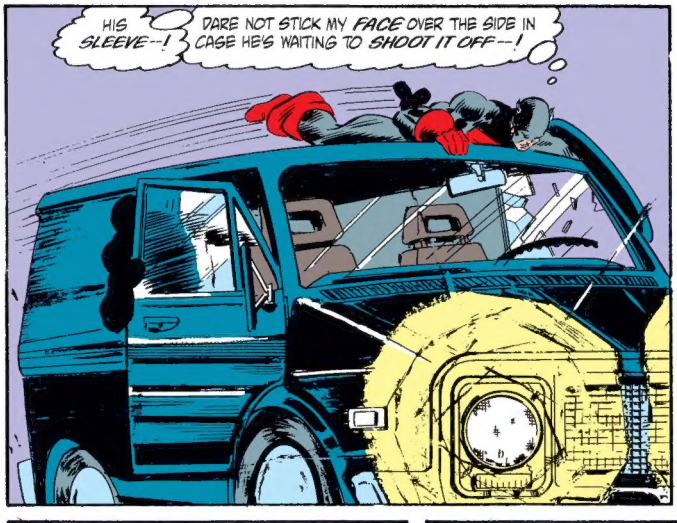
I HAVE A FEELING THERE'S SOMETHING SHE'S NOT TELLING ME, BUT SHE'S DEFINITELY SCARED OUT OF HER WITS!
WE'VE GOT TO GET YOU OUT OF HERE. I'VE GOT A PLAN.
WHICH WAY'S THE BACK EXIT?
THROUGH THERE.
STAY HERE, I'LL BRING MY 'CYCLE AROUND BACK.
AND...
VVMM
VVV
VVM
VVVVMMM
THIS HAD BETTER WORK.
PTOOM
PTOOM
SHOTS!

WITH THESE INFRARED GOGGLES, I SHOULD BE ABLE TO SEE THE HEAT-TRAILS OF THE BULLETS.
GOT 'EM!
GUESS SHE WAS RIGHT--THERE IS SOMEBODY AFTER HER!
SOMEBODY WHO HAS NO COMPUNCTIONS ABOUT TRYING TO VENTILATE AN AVENGER--!
BLAST!
I WAS AFRAID THAT WAS WHAT HE WAS AIMING FOR--MY CYCLE!
GOING DOWN THE HARD WAY!
SEE HOW GOOD THIS VIBRANIUM SHIELD IS AT ABSORBING IMPACT!
BTOOSCH

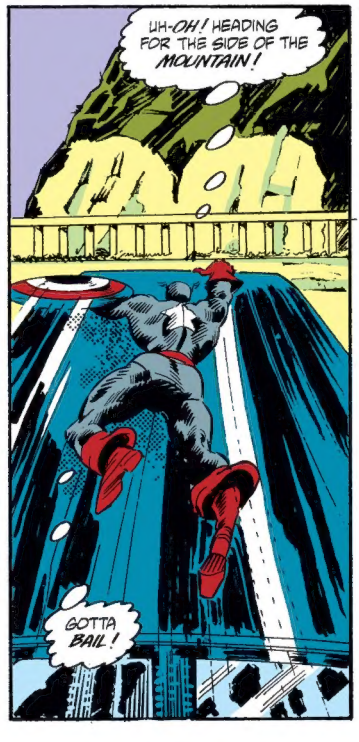
HE'S NOT HERE! MUST'VE--
THAT VAN--!
VROOM
HE'S NOT GONNA GET AWAY!
EYAAAH!
YES!
KRTASSH

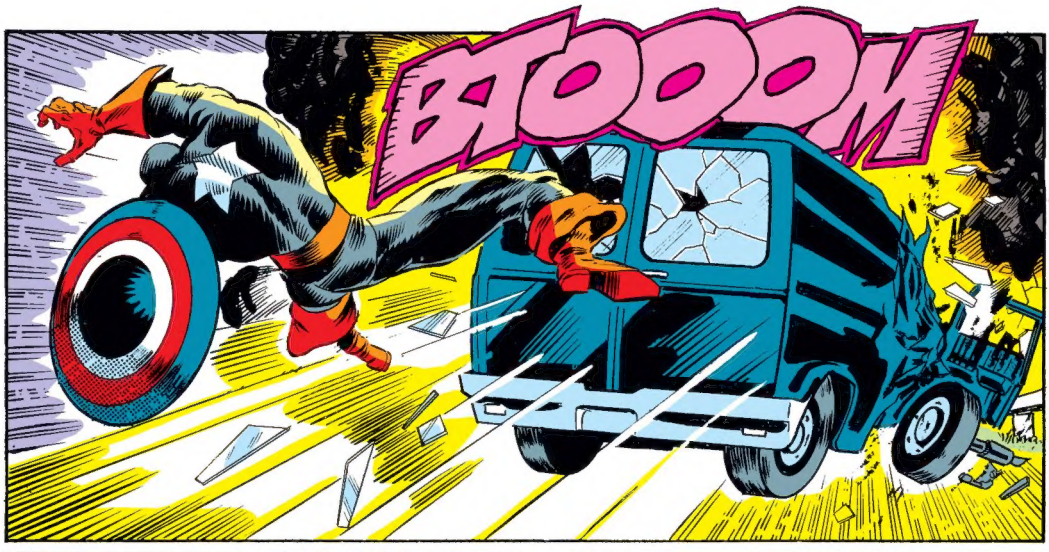

PICKING UP SPEED--
--TRYING TO SHAKE ME LOOSE!
NOT GONNA HAPPEN, PAL!
YOU'RE DEALING WITH A GUY WHO CAN SINK HIS FINGERTIPS INTO THE METAL OF YOUR ROOF!
SON OF A--
BTAM
BTAM
BTAM!
BOY, IS THIS JERK MAKING ME MAD!
KRAASH
END OF THE LINE, MANIAC!

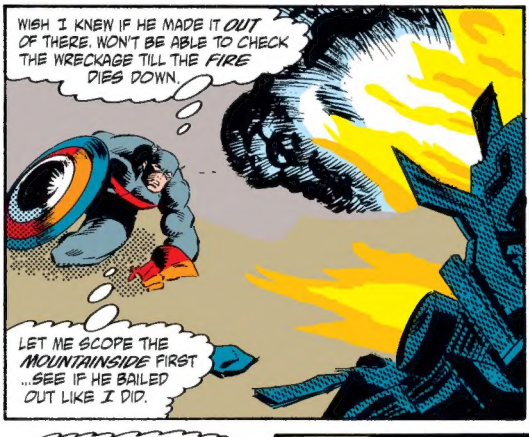

RUUP
WHAT--?!?

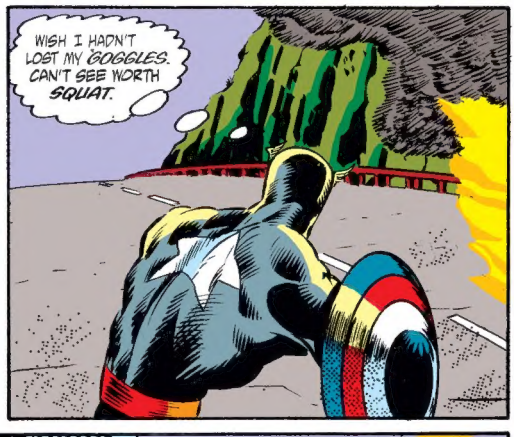

HIS SLEEVE--!
DARE NOT STICK MY FACE OVER THE SIDE IN CASE HE'S WAITING TO SHOOT IT OFF--!

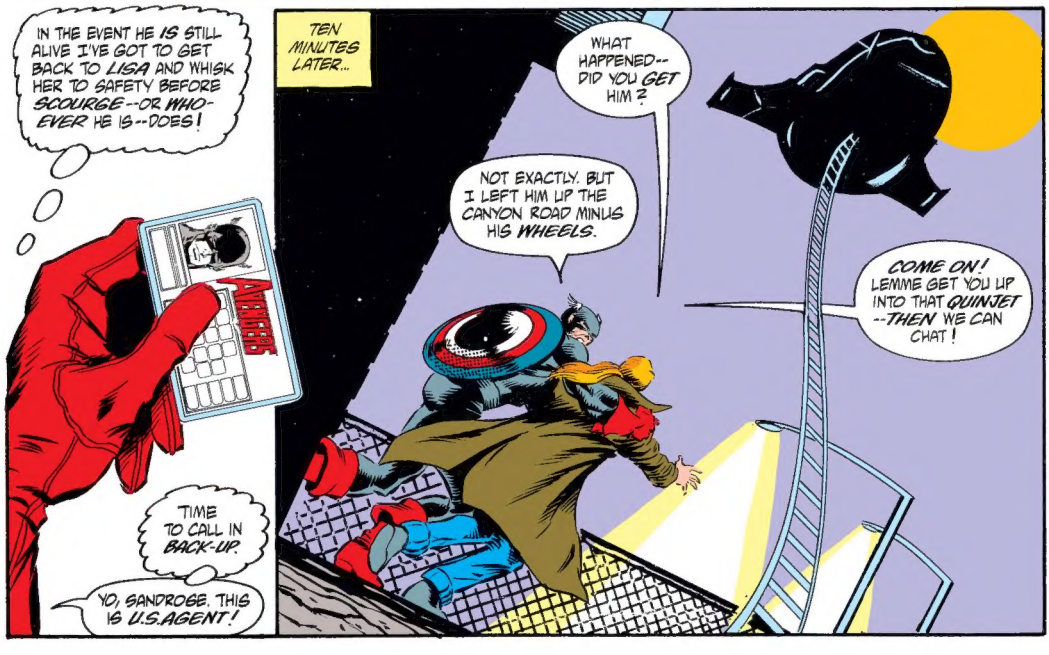
WAIT! DID I SEE THE FAR DOOR SWING OPEN?

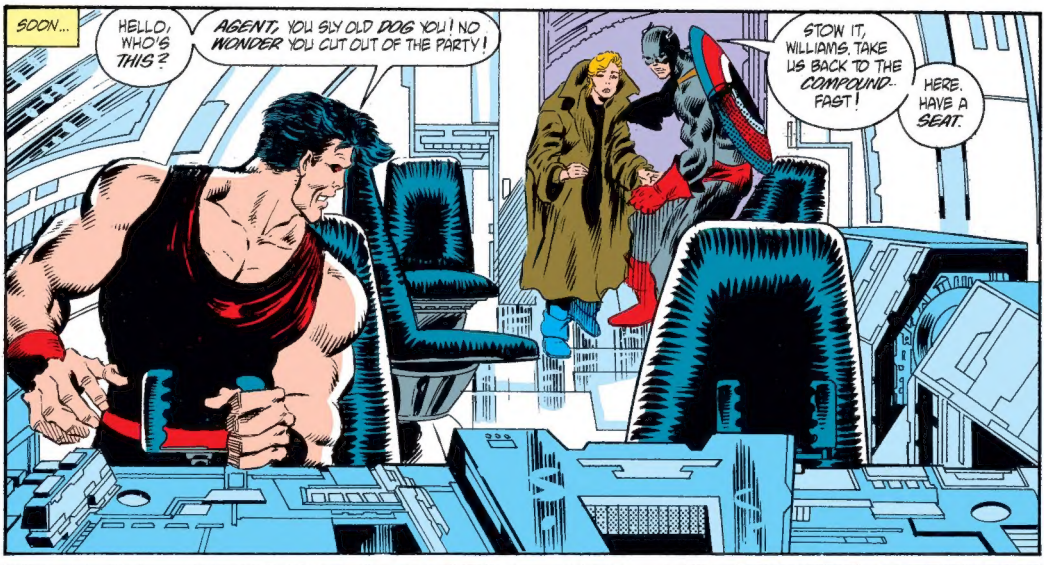

UH-OH! HEADING FOR THE SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN!
GOTTA BAIL!


BATOOOM


WISH I KNEW IF HE MADE IT OUT OF THERE. WON'T BE ABLE TO CHECK THE WRECKAGE TILL THE FIRE DIES DOWN.
LET ME SCOPE THE MOUNTAINSIDE FIRST ...SEE IF HE BAILED OUT LIKE I DID.


WISH I HADN'T LOST MY GOGGLES. CAN'T SEE WORTH SQUAT.

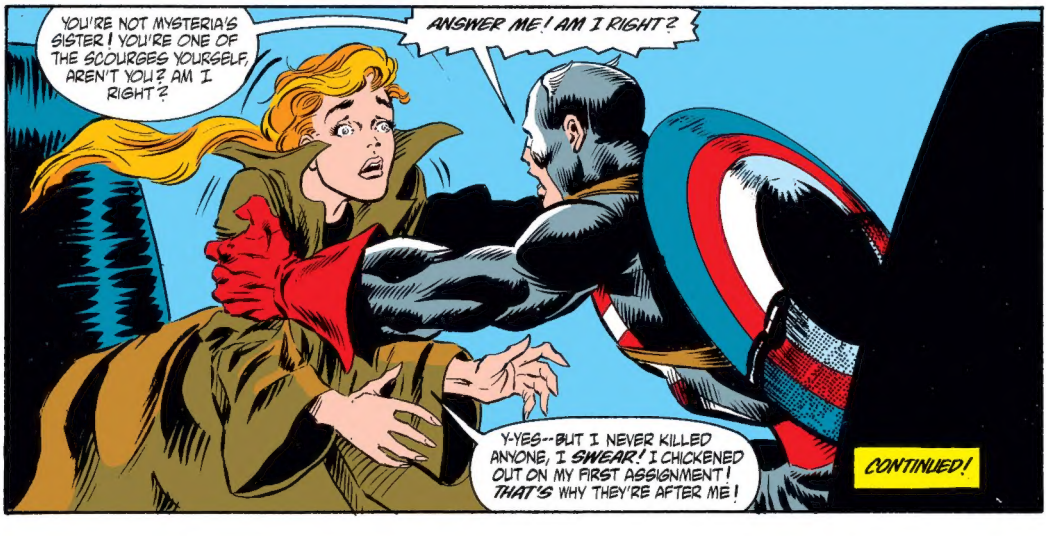

IN THE EVENT HE IS STILL ALIVE I'VE GOT TO GET BACK TO LISA AND WHISK HER TO SAFETY BEFORE SCOURGE--OR WHO-EVER HE IS--DOES!
AVENGERS
TIME TO CALL IN BACK-UP.
YO, SANDROGE. THIS IS U.S.AGENT!
TEN MINUTES LATER...
WHAT HAPPENED--DID YOU GET HIM?
NOT EXACTLY. BUT I LEFT HIM UP THE CANYON ROAD MINUS HIS WHEELS.
COME ON! LEMME GET YOU UP INTO THAT QUINJET --THEN WE CAN CHAT!


SOON...
HELLO, WHO'S THIS?
AGENT, YOU SLY OLD DOG YOU! NO WONDER YOU CUT OUT OF THE PARTY!
STOW IT, WILLIAMS. TAKE US BACK TO THE COMPOUND.. FAST!
HERE. HAVE A SEAT.

OKAY, LADY. YOU'RE SAFE NOW.
AM I? IF YOU DIDN'T SEE HIS DEAD BODY, HE'LL BE BACK FOR ME.

AND EVEN IF YOU DID KILL HIM, THERE'LL BE OTHERS ALONG TO TAKE HIS PLACE, AND THEY WON'T STOP TILL--
NOW HOLD ON, LADY. HOW DO YOU KNOW SO DARN--

UNLESS...


YOU'RE NOT MYSTERIA'S SISTER! YOU'RE ONE OF THE SCOURGES YOURSELF, AREN'T YOU? AM I RIGHT?
ANSWER ME! AM I RIGHT?
Y-YES--BUT I NEVER KILLED ANYONE, I SWEAR! I CHICKENED OUT ON MY FIRST ASSIGNMENT! THAT'S WHY THEY'RE AFTER ME!
CONTINUED!